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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

773.5-MSP/9-1057

DESP. NO.

FROM : AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

September 10, 1957
DATE

REF :

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.
	REC'D 9/19	INFO OTHER NEA-4 RMR-2, OIR-8, P-1, ICA-10 L-2, E-4 OIR-12, USIA-11, Army-4, NAVY-3, AIR-3

SUBJECT: Conversation with GOL Official on MAAG Publicity

Attached is a memorandum of a recent conversation between the Charge d'Affaires a.i., and Mr. Hassan MAKh.. F, acting officer in charge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, pertaining to the Libyan Government's objection to publicity concerning the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group. (Copies of the newspaper items are also attached.)

It is not believed necessary to add comment, except to remark that the GOL's concern may stem from embarrassment at the fact that the newspaper article was published at the time when the GOL was preparing to request all diplomatic missions to withdraw their military attaches and other persons engaged in similar activities.

Rodger P. Davies
Rodger P. Davies
Charge d'Affaires ad Interim

Enclosures: 1+1

Memorandum of Conversation (CONFIDENTIAL
Editorial, Sunday Ghibli, September 1, 1957. (UNCLASSIFIED)
News Item, Sunday Ghibli, September 1, 1957 (UNCLASSIFIED)

cc:Benghazi

DEPT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY J.M.Razi DATE May 6, 1982

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Enclosure No. 1
Desp. No. 89
From TRIPOLI

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SEPTEMBER 5, 1957

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Rodger P. Davies, Charge d'Affaires, a.i.
Mr. Hassan Makhluf, Acting Officer in Charge of Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Tripoli weekly newspaper Sunday Ghibli on September 1 published information concerning the arrival of Colonel Edwin Sachs, Chief of the U.S. Military Assistance Advisory Group to Libya, and the prospective arrival of other personnel to assist in carrying out the United States' commitment to equip an additional thousand men for the Libyan Army. A copy of the article is enclosed. On September 5, the reporting officer was requested to call at the Foreign Ministry where Mr. Hassan MAKHLUF, acting officer in charge, stated that he had been instructed to bring to the Embassy's attention the Government's concern over publication of information relating to the Military Assistance Agreement. Mr. Makhluf said that he had been informed that there had been an understanding at the time the agreement was signed that publicity would be limited and that the Government felt that release of information at this time "was not propitious".

I replied that I had participated in the negotiation of the agreement and was present at the signing of the document and was not aware of any such arrangement. On the contrary, I failed to understand the reason for concern and was most certain that the Department of State would be puzzled by this attitude on the part of the Government of Libya. The MDAP agreement was unclassified and had been publicized by a release issued by the Ministry following the signing ceremony. The Embassy's Public Affairs Officer had been approached by the editor of the Sunday Ghibli for additional information on the arrival of Colonel Sachs and, after clearing with me, had arranged an interview. Considering the attacks that had been leveled against the United States in all organs of the press for its alleged slowness in fulfilling its commitment during and since the MDAP negotiations, I felt that this reassuring account was most certainly in our mutual interests.

Mr. Makhluf pointed out that the Government's press release had referred to the Agreement only in general terms and the specific objection to this story was that it discussed details of the agreement.

I commented to Mr. Makhluf that I had heard stated the bases of Libyan policy from the lips of His Majesty, the former Prime Minister, and the present Prime Minister as concerns friendly cooperation with the United States and use of assistance being provided. In this light, I failed completely to see why details of such cooperation should not be made known to the Libyan people. If the Government failed to make

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known to its people the reasons for policies and decisions, other agencies unfriendly both to the Government of Libya and the United States would take opportunity to spread propaganda completely distroting the nature of Libyan-United States cooperation.

Mr. Makhluf replied that he personally could see nothing wrong with the story as printed and failed to understand why the Government was concerned, but that he was under instructions to so inform me. He said that insofar as public opinion in Libya was concerned, there is no such thing. There are only the great burning issues of Algeria and Palestine and on these, the other agencies I had mentioned could whip up great massemotion against the West. U.S. policy in Libya, as such, could not be used to arouse mass sentiment against us, but when these policies are related by unfriendly elements to our attitudes toward these two big issues, both we and the Government were vulnerable to attack.

Mr. Makhluf repeated that he, personally, saw nothing objectionable in the story, and the primary concern of the Government was that details of the Military Assistance Agreement not be released to the press in Libya. I replied that the question of publishing the text of the Agreement in Libya was certainly a matter within the discretion of the Libyan Government. However, on our part, we failed to understand the basis for reluctance to publicize details of assistance being provided by the United States and considered the Agreement to be unclassified in nature.

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EDITORIAL, SEPTEMBER 1, 1957, SUNDAY GHIBLI

AMERICA SENDS A MILITARY MISSIONS

The arrival last week from America of Colonel Edward I. Sachs, Chief of the United States group of military experts to advise on the use of American arms and equipment will be welcomed here.

The formation of such an advisory group was envisaged when the military aid agreement between Libya and the U.S.A. was signed last June. The speed with which Colonel Sachs has been appointed shows what importance America places on the bond.

The pact itself is similar in scope to those America already has with several other countries, notably Iran, Spain, Korea and Japan, designed to foster international peace and security within the framework of the charter of the United Nations.

As far as Libya is concerned it represents a step-up in aid from America over and above the $23 million made available by the end of the 1956 fiscal year. Already the complete outfitting of 1000 infantrymen is guaranteed, and there is no end to the other arms that may be sent.

The amount is limited only by the authorization of the United States Government. On Libya's part there is the obligation that the arms shall be used only for self-defense, internal security, or other purposes once the agreement of the United States has been received; but all the ingredients are embodied in the pact that will give Libya a first class and ultra-modern little Army.

No one of course expects that the Libyan forces will ever need to do much other than defend the country's borders or maintain internal security, but those foreigners who have fought side-by-side with Libyan soldiers know how excellent these are in their own terrain. They will be glad that Libya has the chance of first-class equipment and that top-notch men are available to demonstrate how it is used.

For Colonel Sachs is no armchair soldier. He is a career man with wide experience of battle and peacetime conditions. Graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1930, he served with America's airborne troops during WWII, and was Provost Marshall with America's Eighth Army in the Korean War.

Later he was on duty in the Office of the US Secretary of Defense where he was closely associated with US-Libyan affairs, and in 1956 was appointed chief of the US Army Material Branch, Military Assistance Division with EUCOM in Paris.

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NEWS ITEM SUNDAY TRIPOLI, SEPTEMBER 1, 1957.

U.S. FOLLOWS UP MILITARY PACT

INFANTRY COLONEL NAMED MISSION CHIEF:
HELPING LIBYA ON MILITARY NEEDS

A Colonel of the Infantry Corps, United States Army, has been chosen to head the 14-strong U.S. Military Mission to Libya, it was announced last week in Tripoli.

He is Edward I. Sachs, a veteran of WWII and the Korean War, a career soldier, with a wealth of battle and peacetime soldiering experience to draw on. His official title is Chief of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG/Libya).

Colonel Sachs arrived in Tripoli from Paris last weeks with Mrs. Sachs and a nine-years-old daughter. His arrival and the formation of MAAG/Libya fulfills a promise made by the USA when the Libyan-American military aid pact was signed in June.

Using the American Embassy as its headquarters the Mission will assist Libya by furnishing advice and help on technical, training and administration details.

- ENOUGH FOR 1000 MEN -

The type of equipment to be supplied to the Libyan Army has not yet been announced, but it was stated in June that enough for 1000 men would initially be sent. It is anticipated that training responsibility will be assigned to MAAG in the near future.

"The US Government desires to assist and aid small democratic nations friendly to the free world." said Colonel Sachs.

MAAG will deal with all departments of the Libyan Army, including infantry, artillery, ordnance, signal and adjutant general personnel.

ESTIMATING MILITARY NEEDS

MAAG will at first be administrative and logistical, helping the Libyan government to estimate its future military needs.

A British Military Mission has been in Libya for several years, and a supply of British arms and equipment was handed over to the Libyan Army in 1956.

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